



**ROCKBEARE
PARISH COUNCIL**

Chairman: Cllr. Phil Franklin

Clerk: Carolyn Y. May
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14th November 2023

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING OF ROCKBEARE PARISH COUNCIL

To all Members of Rockbeare Parish Council

You are hereby summoned to attend an Ordinary Meeting of Rockbeare Parish Council, to be held at **6pm, on Tuesday 21st November 2023**, at Marsh Green Village Hall, for the purposes of transacting the following business:

Carolyn May

Clerk to Rockbeare Parish Council

AGENDA

All Councillors are politely reminded of their obligation to declare interests under the Code of Conduct.

Please Note: This meeting will be recorded.

- 1.0 APOLOGIES:** To receive apologies for absence.
- 2.0 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** To receive declarations of interest.
Members – please remember that you must declare any personal or prejudicial interest at the start of the meeting. Please ensure that you state the reason for your interest, as this must be included in the Minutes of the meeting. If your interest is a ‘Declarable Pecuniary Interest’ then you must leave the meeting whilst the matter is discussed.
- 3.0 TO RECEIVE QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC – Strictly 15 minutes in total. Thereafter, members of the public may not enter discussions without the express permission of the Parish Council Chairman.**
- 4.0 MINUTES:** Minutes Of the last Meeting of Rockbeare Parish Council, held on 19th October 2023 to be signed as a true correct record of that Meeting (Appendix A).
- 5.0 REPORTS**
 - 5.1 Chairman’s Report
 - 5.3 County/ District Councillors Report – DCC Report appended
 - 5.4 Any other reports

6.0 WARM SPACES / PARISHIONER SUPPORT – report to be disseminated.

7.0 PLANNING

7.1 To consider Planning Applications – none at the date of publication.

7.2 To consider Planning Applications received since the date of this Agenda.

7.3 To receive, and note, details of Planning Determinations - Appendix B

8.0 CORRESPONDENCE

- Responses to request – Birch End

9.0 BUSINESS AND FINANCE

9.1 **Schedule of Payments** – to follow.

10.0 BUDGET/ PRECEPT SETTING – Documents to follow.

11.0 CAR PARKING AREA – Rockbeare

- Space Marking and Allocation

12.0 MILLENNIUM FIELD PROJECT – Update



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MINUTES OF ROCKBEARE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

HELD ON

WEDNESDAY 17TH OCTOBER 2023

PRESENT: Cllr. Franklin (Chairman), Cllr M. Nequest, Cllrs. R. Nequest, A. Dunn and P. Dunn

Also: Cllr. T. Olive (EDDC) and several members of the public

Parish Clerk: Minutes taken by Cllr. R. Nequest

AGENDA

58/23 Apologies – Cllr Mark Nequest (Vice-Chairman), Cllr. Simon Brodie, Cllr Sarah Randall - Johnson (Devon Council), Carolyn May (Parish Clerk).

59/23 Declarations of Interest - None

60/23 Public Session

Car Parking

One member of the public enquired about the plan for Parish Council's parking area, across from the Primary School. The Chairman advised that now the tarmacing had been completed, five parking bays would be marked out. One space would be exclusively for the use of disabled persons, two spaces would be reserved for parishioners (upon payment of £30.00 p/m), and two spaces would be open for use by any persons. Should no parishioners opt to rent either of the reserved spaces, then these will become available for general use. These will, however, be time restricted.

It was felt that, in the future, an electric charging station could be installed at the site.

It was **agreed** that parishioners would have until the 20th November to request one of the reserved spaces.

The Head Teacher from Rockbeare Primary School advised the meeting that a substantial amount of work had been undertaken, with parents of the children, to ensure the provision of courtesy parking within Rockbeare. Consultations are also being undertaken to provide options for staggered drop-offs and pick-ups, as well as latter collection from the school.

Cllr. A. Dunn advised that the parking issue does not only relate to school traffic. The Head Teacher stated that Devon Highways had, in fact, attended the area, and had removed inappropriately parked vehicles.

Street Lighting

The Head Teacher requested to raise the matter of the lamppost situated opposite the school. This matter had been discussed, on several occasions, previously. Cllr Franklin advised the Head Teacher that, according to Devon Highways, there had never been a light at the site. Further to this, the Parish Council had been advised that the cost of installing a new lamppost would be prohibitive for Devon Council and/ or Rockbeare Parish Council. Cllr Olive (EDDC) suggested that the Head Teacher should write to the local Member of Parliament.

61/23 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD on 19th September 2023

Members considered the draft Minutes for the last meeting of the Parish Council, held on 18th July 2023.

It was **proposed** by Cllr A. Dunn, **seconded** by Cllr. R. Dunn and **RESOLVED** that the Minutes would be accepted as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting, Unanimous. **Carried.**

62/23 REPORTS

Reports for September and October were distributed and discussed. It was noted that the Cranbrook Town Council boundaries are to be reviewed. Rockbeare Parish Council will be invited to the consultation event.

63/23 WARM SPACES

Sharon Thorne addressed the meeting. She advised that the Hub is going well, and that diverse group of people are accessing the same, from 0815 hrs to noon.

On average, thirty people attend the event each week. Information provided highlighted the fact that most attendees are villagers, or parents dropping their children off at the Primary School. Therefore, all are actively involved in the community.

Funding - Sharon is willing to continue with the project if the Parish Council continues to fund the same. Sharon will also submit grant applications to defray the cost to the Parish Council. Cllr Franklin suggested that, to assist with the costs, the Hub should hold two fund raising events each year. Sharon agreed that this is a good idea.

Sharon is to discuss this matter with the Parish Clerk.

64/23 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Application 23/1584/FUL

Address: Hawthorns, Rockbeare

Proposal: Attached two-storey Annex

The Parish Council made no comment on this matter.

PLANNING DECISIONS - Noted

65/23 CORRESPONDENCE

A letter of complaint had been received from a parishioner, resident in Marsh Green. The complainant had noted that a CCTV camera, mounted on a property adjacent to the Millenium Field at Marsh Green, appeared to be trained on the Millenium Field, resulting in users of the facility feeling uncomfortable. The complainant advised that he intended to allow the Parish Council to address the matter, prior to his placing notices of warning on the gate to the site, and throughout the same.

The Clerk had, in response, advised the parishioner that the land belonged to the Parish Council, and that no permission would be granted, permitting the posting of notices on the field. The Clerk advised that the complainant should discuss the matter either with the householder, or the police.

A Police Officer, present at the meeting advised that there was nothing that could be done in respect of the positioning of CCTV cameras. Householders have a right to append these to their homes. The best option, moving on, would be to provide screening.

66/23 MILLENIUM GREEN

Cllr Nequest reported that the benches have now been installed at the site. Quotations are being obtained for tarmacing at the field entrance.

The question of whether dogs should be allowed in the space was discussed. Since there is no evidence of dog mess, and it was felt that the parishioners are responsible pet owners who would "scoop the poop", it was proposed that dogs continue to be allowed.

It was **proposed** by Cllr. Franklin, **seconded** by Cllr. Andrew Dunn, and RESOLVED dogs would continue to be permitted in Millenium Field. Unanimous. **Carried.**

It was **agreed** that Information boards regarding wildlife found within the Millenium Field are to be investigated. Messages about dogs will be included within that signage.

67/23 BUSINESS AND FINANCE

67/23.1 Members considered the Schedule of Payments and Bank Reconciliation

It was **proposed** by Cllr. Rebecca Nequest, **seconded** by Cllr. Ripley Dunn, and RESOLVED that the schedule of payments would be accepted, and the liabilities discharged. Unanimous. **Carried.**

67/23.2 The Bank Reconciliation was accepted.

68/23 PARISH NEWSLETTER

It was **agreed** that the Victim Care website details would be included on the newsletter.

69/23 BANK ACCOUNT UPDATE

This matter is progressing.

70/23 BIRCH END COVENANT

The covenant to be discussed, again, with the person who donated the land. It was **agreed** that the Chairman would meet with the Donor.

71/23 LAND ACQUISITION/ DISPOSAL - deferred

The Meeting Closed at 19.20 hrs.

Planning Decisions

Reference	23/1584/FUL
Alternative Reference	PP-12320687
Application Validated	Tue 19 Sep 2023
Address	Hawthorns Rockbeare EX5 2EG
Proposal	Proposed attached two storey annexe.
Status	Approved
Decision	Approval with conditions
Decision Issued Date	Mon 23 Oct 2023

Reference	23/1250/MOUT
Alternative Reference	PP-12134536
Application Validated	Wed 21 Jun 2023
Address	Land East Of Antiques Complex/Harriers Court Industrial Estate Long Lane Rockbeare
Proposal	Outline application for the erection of a HVDC Converter Station and associated infrastructure with all matters reserved.
Status	Approved
Decision	Approval with conditions
Decision Issued Date	Fri 27 Oct 2023

November 2023 DCC Monthly Report

Cllr Sara Randall Johnson

Budgeting and living with the means available

Devon County Council is going through a major restructure currently of how the 'business' operates, so that it can best serve the needs of the residents of Devon with the physical and financial resources available to it. There is a lot of publicity currently about the financial health of Local Government and a number of them issuing what is called a section 114 notice. In effect, this is a declaration that they cannot meet their obligations in producing a legally required budget and 'handing back the keys' to central government to send in commissioners to run services at the minimum legal level. There is often no one single reason for this but certainly growing demand for services, children's in particular, combined with inflation are major factors in many instances.

Devon County Council took early steps to address this and reorganise and as part of this are currently in advanced negotiations with the Department for Education for a very significant financial settlement (called the 'safety valve') and not currently at risk of having to issue a section 114 notice.

Setting a balanced budget early next year is going to be very difficult, resulting in some very difficult choices having to be made where core spending power has reduced in real terms by 27 per cent since 2010/11 as Councils remain firmly in the eye of the inflationary storm and finances are under pressure like never before.

'Levelling Up'

The Levelling up & Regeneration Bill recently received Royal Assent, a raft of new measures came into force which the government says will "put local people at the heart of development". County and District Councils will be expected to work with a faster and less bureaucratic planning system with developers held to account.

More beautiful homes (whatever that means in Devonshire English!), built alongside GP surgeries, schools and transport links, and environmental enhancement. Communities taking back control of their future with new powers to shape their local area.

This all sounds very good, but of course the proof of the pudding is in the eating and it will be interesting to see how Councils interpret the Bill where clearly it's critical in protecting our rural green spaces, but much of it seemingly has a more urban than rural focus and must not just be a tick box exercise.

The Act says will:

- Boost local services – requiring developers to deliver vital infrastructure. This will put an end to lifeless edge-of-town developments with no community assets and ensure developers deliver the schools, doctors surgeries and public services communities need and expect. Further details on these measures will be set out shortly.
- Rebalance the housing and land markets, giving local councils the power to increase council tax on empty homes and reforming compensation for compulsory purchase orders by removing 'hope value' where justified.
- Encourage developers to get building; giving communities updates on the progress of development and giving councils the chance to consider slow 'build out' rates when approving planning.

- Bring high streets back to life, giving councils the powers to work directly with landlords to bring empty buildings back in to use by local businesses and community groups through high street rental auctions. It will also make it faster for local authorities to give hospitality businesses permission to use outdoor seating.

If you need advice on new towns we have a wealth of expertise on our doorstep. You might not be aware that Cranbrook is the first new town to be built in Devon since mediaeval times. Residents of the town are very fortunate to have an excellent and dedicated Town Clerk and deputies as well as Councillors who have worked tirelessly, often battling developers as well as Government at all levels to get services delivered. And before the first turf was dug neighbouring Parish Councils (Broadclyst, Clyst Honiton, Rockbeare and Whimble) were making sure preparatory works and planning applications were fit for purpose.

Station ticket offices proposals

Although not a primary function of EDDC, many concerns have been raised with colleagues and me by residents about proposals to close all railway station ticket offices, with much reduced staff and hours of operation for larger or busier ones where staff would be on hand to help.

Following a lengthy nationwide consultation and much lobbying, the government has determined that they must be scrapped; not reaching the threshold of an acceptable replacement that was fair on all users of the railways. I think we all recognise that times are changing with most people buying tickets online from machines at railway stations but these proposed major changes were too extreme at this time

Highways

DCC Highways teams have taken an absolute battering this year with wet weather and flooding events in particular have decimated planned maintenance but despite that are pressing on with as much of the programme as possible when not dealing with 'risk to life' events or clearing up after flooding, fallen trees and damaged buildings.

They are doing their best to keep all of the plates spinning and I would ask that you understand that they must prioritise workload those 'risk to life' events while not diminishing the priority of things you have reason to contact them for.

ENDS